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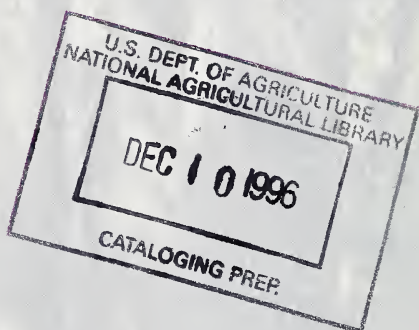
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Search tural Areas

Southern Forest Experiment Station



Research Natural Areas—

Research Natural Areas (RNA's) are lands that are conserved for research, monitoring, and education and to help in maintaining biological diversity. The USDA Forest Service has permanently protected more than 250 RNA's in a national network that contains unique ecosystems as well as a representative group of ecosystem types, including forest, aquatic-riparian, shrubland, grassland, and alpine habitats.



What are they?



■ *RNA's can provide habitat for rare plants and animals that need special protection.*



■ *RNA's help to preserve the best remaining examples of pristine or relatively undisturbed natural communities for future generations. In addition, they provide sites for research and study today.*



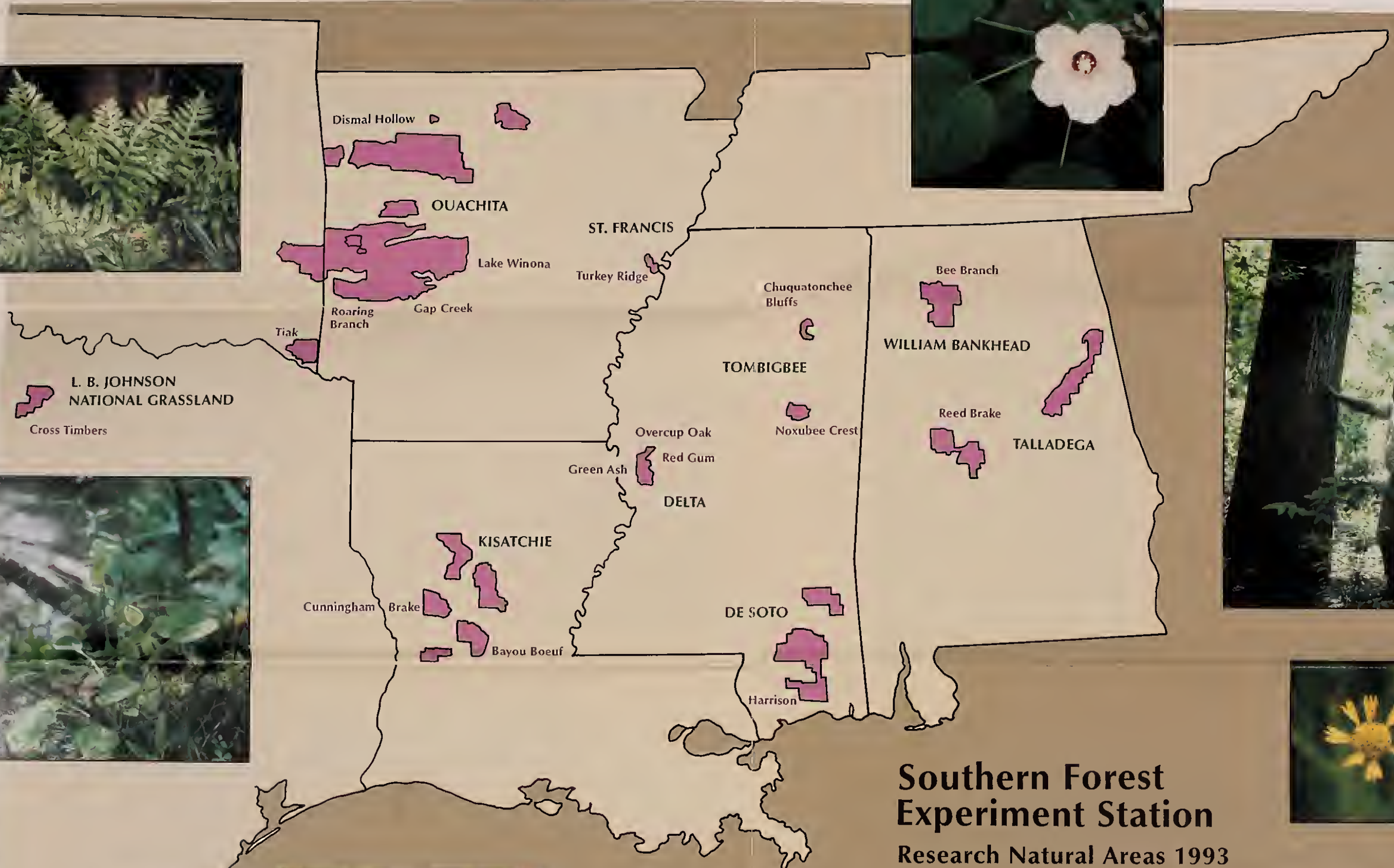
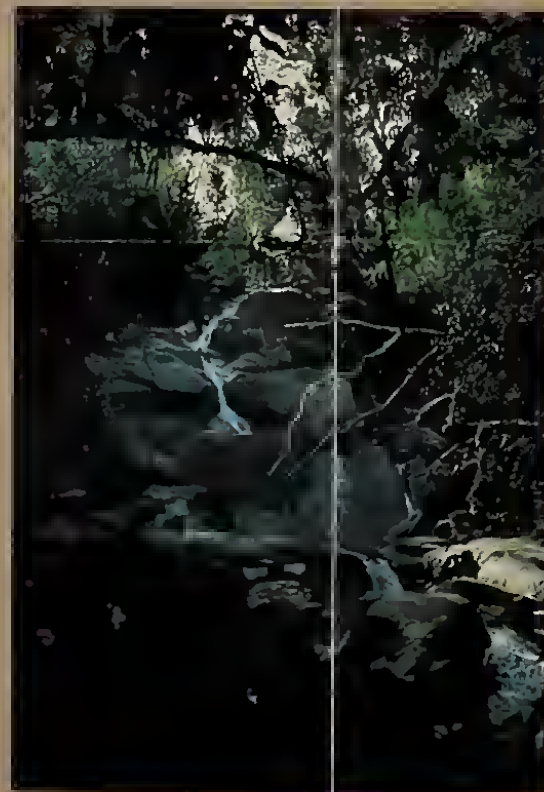
RNA Establishment

Nominations for new RNA's can come from anyone, within or outside of the Forest Service, and are sent to the appropriate Forest Supervisor and Station Director.

■ *Eighteen RNA's are established in the 7 States of the Southern Forest Experiment Station, and more than 20 candidates are being evaluated.*



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Southern Forest Experiment Station Research Natural Areas 1993

Area Name	National Forest	State	Acres	Date Established
Bano de Oro	Caribbean	PR	1,840	1975
Bayou Boeuf	Kisatchie	LA	737	1949
Bee Branch	William Bankhead	AL	12B	1962
Chuquatonchee Bluffs	Tombigbee	MS	216	1991
Cross Timbers	L. B. Johnson National Grassland	TX	170	1977
Cunningham Brake	Kisatchie	LA	1,731	1990
Dismal Hollow	Ozark	AR	2,077	1990
Gap Creek	Ouachita	AR	1,125	1990
Green Ash	Delta	MS	70	1943
Harrison	De Soto	MS	94	1989
Lake Winona	Ouachita	AR	240	1977
Noxubee Crest	Tombigbee	MS	536	1990
Overcup Oak	Delta	MS	40	1943
Red Gum	Delta	MS	40	1943
Reed Brake	Talladega	AL	59B	1975
Roaring Branch	Ouachita	AR	330	1969
Tiak	Ouachita	AR	199	1990
Turkey Ridge	St. Francis	AR	400	1988

The Nature Conservancy, State heritage commissions, and the Natural Area Association are some of the cooperators that assist in identifying and establishing RNA's.

RNA candidates must be recommended in the Forest Plan, after an ecological assessment.

Each candidate area is evaluated, and an Establishment Record is prepared for candidates that meet RNA requirements.

After review, the establishment record is sent to the Chief of the Forest Service, who establishes RNA's.

Use of RNA's

Use of RNA's by responsible scientists and educators is encouraged.



■ *Researchers from the Forest Service, universities, and elsewhere use RNA's for long-term monitoring and to help understand the effects of resource management practices.*



Educators use RNA's for supervised activities such as field trips for upper-level and graduate students. Members of native plant societies and other conservation groups visit RNA's.



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